

**AGENDA-Wednesday, March 13, 2024**  
**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
6:00 p.m.  
Newbury Library Media Center

**Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education Mission Statement:**

We believe the public education is an essential component of a free and democratic society. In a partnership of family, school, community, and local and state government, our mission is to enable all students to meet high standards, make productive choices in their personal lives, contribute to a diverse global society and act as responsible citizens.

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**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

**2.0 PUBLIC PORTION**

**3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 3.1 February 28, 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting
- 3.2 March 6, 2024 BOE Budget Workshop

**4.0 REPORTS**

- 4.1 Student Representatives- Owen Langer, Fiona Leon
- 4.2 Principals' Report- F. Amara, G. Franklin
- 4.3 Superintendent's Report- S. LePage
- 4.4 Director of Finance and Operations- J. Gaskins

**5.0 OLD BUSINESS**

- 5.1 2024-2025 Budget Discussion
- 5.2 Updates
- 5.3 BOE Goals

**6.0 NEW BUSINESS**

- 6.1 Approval of the State Mandated Increasing Educated Diversity Plan
- 6.2 Healthy Food Certification for 7.1.2024 to 6.30.2025

**7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

- 7.1 Approval Highlander Basketball Camp 8.5.24 to 8.9.24

**8.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS**

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Enclosures: Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes 2.28.2024  
Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes 3.6.2024  
State Mandated Increasing Educated Diversity Plan  
Letter of Approval for Highlander Basketball Camp

Next Meeting: March 16, 2024, Budget Workshop @ 8:00 a.m. – New Hartford Town Hall  
March 20, 2024, First Informal Town Budget Presentation: Colebrook Town Hall 7:00 p.m.  
Regular BOE Meeting to follow.  
March 27, 2024, Second Informal Town Budget Presentation: Norfolk, Botelle School-Cafeteria 6:30 p.m.  
April 3, 2024 , Third Informal Town Budget Presentation: New Hartford Town Hall, Senior Center 7:00 p.m.

We welcome the public to share their comments via [publicinput@nwr7.org](mailto:publicinput@nwr7.org). Your emails will be considered during the Public Comment session of the meeting. Thank you for your participation.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7  
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES  
February 28, 2024 – 6 p.m.  
**DRAFT**

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Lisa Fragale(C), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins.

**Absent:** Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read called the Board of Education meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**PUBLIC PORTION:** None.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **APPROVE** the February 14, 2024, Board of Education Meeting Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Crone. **MOTION PASSED.**

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **APPROVE** the February 14, 2024, Special Board of Education Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. **MOTION PASSED.**

**MOTION** by Ms. Duran, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **APPROVE** the February 21, 2024, Special Board of Education Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. **MOTION PASSED.**

### **PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET OVERVIEW 2024-2025**

Superintendent LePage began his Proposed 2024-2025 Budget Presentation thanking Mr. James Gaskins, Ms. Diane Barrett, and Ms. Hope Carfiro, for their assistance. Superintendent LePage's recommended budget, representing the goals and mission of enabling all students to achieve academic and personal excellence, is for \$24,305,668. This is an increase of \$850,140 and 3.62% over the 2023-2024 Budget.

Superintendent LePage presents the drivers of this proposed budget. He expressed the budget drivers are seeking the right balance with the student needs, with limited resources. Budget drivers include significant increases in the Special Education Outplacements, the continued Specialized High School Program Support, the significant increase in the medical benefits renewal and the Athletic Trainer Requirements with new State Mandates in place. Another budget driver is keeping the department level funding increase at 0%, deferring spending on school capital needs, and the one new Ag-Ed teacher request is not included in the budget. There are also three teaching position reductions. Superintendent LePage reviews the fiscal cliff considerations for RSD#7- Budget Elimination of 2-year Grant funding as of June 30, 2023, which include Esser Middle School SEL and Academic Support, the ARP Grant Funded Middle School Math Teacher, and the elimination of the Emergency Connectivity Grant.

Superintendent LePage discussed the Social Security increases during the last five years have averaged 4.14% compared to the average RSD#7 budget increase of only 2.10% and average assessment of 1.83%. Superintendent LePage explained when reviewing the District Reference Groups (DRGs), which are a State classification system that groups local and regional public school districts together based on the



similar socioeconomic status of their students, RSD#7 High Schools falls in the 81.3% and the RSD#7 Middle School falls 78.2% in comparison to similar classified area school districts. Superintendent LePage presented the Regional School District No. 7's Smarter Balance Achievement results, the range of current expenditures per pupil in the Berkshire League, PSAT and SAT comparative data and the percentage of students with AP scores of 3 or higher. Superintendent LePage discussed the current and projected member town enrollment and the changes in average daily membership by town.

Superintendent LePage presented how RSD#7 focuses on continued excellence by adding the following courses for 2024-2025: Digital Design Studio, Art Classroom Mentorship, Advanced Personal Finance, Business Classroom Mentorship, UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It, Journalism II, Zoology, UConn EMT Training (pending approval) and the History of Rock and Roll. Additions to World Language are Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Film and Honors Novel. Ag Ed and Tech courses offers for the 2024-2025 school year include Ag Business Management and Fisheries Management.

Additionally, Superintendent LePage provided an Object breakdown overview of the budget increases and decreases in salaries, benefits, purchased professional and technical services, purchased property services, supplies, property, other objects and debt services. Explanation was provided of the major budget drivers. Excess Cost expenditures offsets reflected in special education, professional and technical services, transportation and tuitions. Superintendent LePage displayed a historical perspective on assessments over a 5-year period.

Superintendent LePage concluded that Regional School District No. 7, the pride of the Northwest Corner, with exceptional teachers, strong administrators and support staff, and outstanding custodial staff, provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners, and students that graduate with exceptional academic achievement results. Discussion followed.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Updates- Ms. Sexton Read and BOE Members thanked Superintendent LePage for the Valentine's chocolates that were distributed to the BOE members on the 2.14.24 BOE Meeting

BOE Goals- None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

Jessica Angell- Letter of Resignation

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ACCEPT** Ms. Angell's letter of resignation, as presented. The RSD#7 family greatly appreciates the years of service and dedication to the district, and wishes Ms. Angell much success in her new position. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

#### **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **ADJOURN** at 7:29 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett  
Board Clerk



**Northwestern Regional School District No. 7**  
**Superintendent's Proposed 2024-2025 Budget**  
**Presented: February 28, 2024**

***The Pride of the Northwest Corner***

**February 28, 2024**



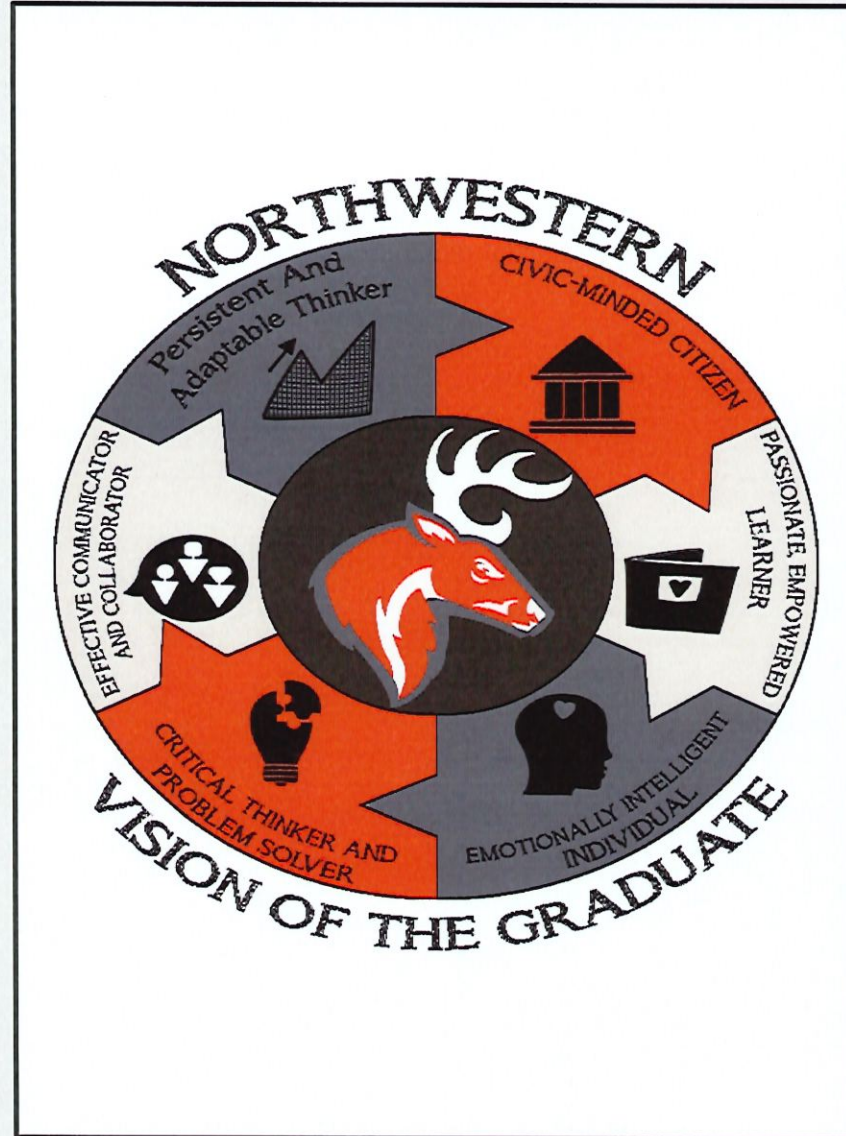
# *Superintendent's Budgeting Commitments:*

*We will:*

- *remain transparent and conscientious in our approach to budget development*
- *request and secure the resources we believe essential to educate and support our students and staff*
- *model our Vision of the Graduate attributes in all budget development practices, and through my leadership practices*
- *do our very best to ensure that Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 remains a model of excellence in the state and on the national level*



# *Northwestern Vision of the Graduate*



*The Pride of the Northwest Corner*



# Proposed Budget: Historical Overview

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
• 2019-2020	1.77%	1.54%
• 2020-2021	2.53%	2.49%
• 2021-2022	1.33%	0.38%
• 2022-2023	2.45%	1.97%
• 2023-2024	2.42%	2.79%
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• <b>2024-2025</b>	<b>3.62%</b>	<b>3.93%</b>

*Five Year Average Budget Increase:*  
**2.10%**

*Five Year Assessment Average:* **1.83%**





# Budget Drivers: Seeking the Right Balance

## *Students Needs/Limited Resources*

### Special Education Programming:

- Significant Increase in Special Education Outplacements
- Continue Specialized High School Program Support

### Regular Education Programming:

- Significant Increase in Medical Benefits Renewal
- Athletic Trainer Requirements (State Mandates)

### Budget Mitigation Staffing Reductions:

- Department Level funding increase held at 0%
- Deferred spending on school capital needs
- 1 new Ag-Ed teacher request not included in this budget
- 3 Teaching Position Reductions:
  - 1.6 High School (English and World Language)
  - 0.4 Middle School (World Language)
  - 0.6 High School Social Studies not replaced (0.8 total reduction in sections)
  - Increase of 0.6 Library Media Specialist to full 1.0 FTE

### “Fiscal Cliff” Considerations for NWR7:

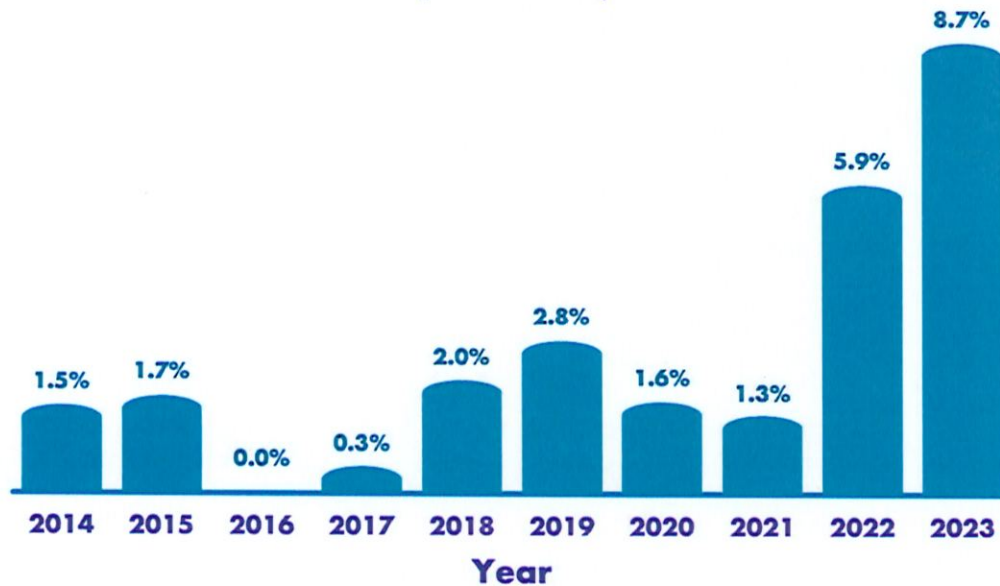
- Budget Elimination of 2-Year Grant Funding as of June 30, 2023
  - ESSER Middle School SEL and Academic Support (\$106,949)
  - ARP Middle School Math Teacher (\$213,277)
  - Emergency Connectivity Grant (\$113,102)





# Budgeting For Efficiency and Excellence Through Challenging Times

## Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs)



Source: The Social Security Administration

The Motley Fool

Social Security COLA increases during the last 5 years have averaged 4.14% compared to the average NWR7 Budget Increase of only 2.10%, and Average Assessment Increase of 1.83%.

## Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

Year	COLA	Year	COLA	Year	COLA
1975	8.0	1995	2.6	2015	0.0
1976	6.4	1996	2.9	2016	0.3
1977	5.9	1997	2.1	2017	2.0
1978	6.5	1998	1.3	2018	2.8
1979	9.9	1999	2.5	2019	1.6
1980	14.3	2000	3.5	2020	1.3
1981	11.2	2001	2.6	2021	5.9
1982	7.4	2002	1.4	2022	8.7
1983	3.5	2003	2.1	2023	3.2
1984	3.5	2004	2.7		
1985	3.1	2005	4.1		
1986	1.3	2006	3.3		
1987	4.2	2007	2.3		
1988	4.0	2008	5.8		
1989	4.7	2009	0.0		
1990	5.4	2010	0.0		
1991	3.7	2011	3.6		
1992	3.0	2012	1.7		
1993	2.6	2013	1.5		
1994	2.8	2014	1.7		



# Budget Comparison Data

<u>Town/Region:</u>	<u>DRG</u>	<u>2023/24 Adopted Budget Percent</u>	<u>2024/25 Sup Proposed Budget</u>	<u>2024/25 BOE Adopted Budget</u>
Bethany	C	3.58%	5.44%	5.44%
Cheshire	B	5.37%	6.05%	5.97%
Cromwell	D	6.37%	5.75%	6.63%
East Hampton	D		6.21%	
East Lyme	D	6.80%	6.08%	
Ellington	C	4.83%	4.23%	4.05%
Greenwich	B	2.90%	6.50%	5.60%
Guilford	B	4.63%	5.46%	
Madison	B	2.52%	3.44%	3.41%
Milford	D	4.20%	4.70%	4.70%
Monroe	B	4.80%	7.15%	7.15%
New Canaan	A	4.00%	6.54%	6.59%
Newington	D	4.50%	7.99%	
Tolland	C	3.00%	6.98%	6.35%
Southington	D	5.79%	8.35%	6.24%



# Budget Comparison Data

<u>Town/Region:</u>	<u>DRG</u>	<u>2023/24 Adopted Budget Percent</u>	<u>2024/25 Sup Proposed Budget</u>	<u>2024/25 BOE Adopted Budget</u>
Newtown	B	3.57%	4.99%	5.59%
Old Saybrook	D	4.94%	3.38%	3.38%
Oxford	C	3.27%	5.65%	5.77%
Region #7	C	2.42%	3.62%	
Region #8	C	2.85%	2.64%	
Region #12	C	5.26%		
Region #13	C	3.98%	4.48%	
Region #17	C		4.99%	
Region #18	C	2.91%	0.62%	3.00%
Region #19	C	3.99%		
Region #20	C	2.91%		
Rocky Hill	D	3.78%	5.84%	
Somers	C	4.34%	6.84%	6.48%
Suffield	C	5.69%	4.19%	



## How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C High Schools?

School:	Student #	Grades	F.T.E.	F.T.E./Student Ratio	Accountability Index Score:
<b>Northwestern HS</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>67.6</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>81.3</b>
<b>Canton HS</b>	464	9-12	50.0	9.3	<b>81.6</b>
<b>Ellington HS</b>	737	9-12	77.4	9.5	<b>77.4</b>
<b>Oxford HS</b>	527	9-12	51.9	10.2	<b>75.0</b>
<b>Somers HS</b>	384	9-12	57.9	6.6	<b>75.8</b>
<b>Suffield HS</b>	676	9-12	75.3	9.0	<b>76.0</b>
<b>Tolland HS</b>	724	9-12	67.8	10.7	<b>77.3</b>
<b>Reg. 4 Valley HS</b>	489	9-12	58.0	8.4	<b>75.1</b>
<b>Reg. 8 RHAM HS</b>	819	9-12	92.0	10.6	<b>77.0</b>
<b>Reg. 10 Lewis Mills</b>	648	9-12	71.7	9.0	<b>77.0</b>



## How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C High Schools?

School:	Student #	Grades	F.T.E.	F.T.E./Student Ratio	Accountability Index Score:
Reg. 12 Shepaug HS	494	9-12	59.8	8.3	75.1
Reg. 13 Coginchaug HS	359	9-12	49.2	7.3	77.6
Reg. 14 Nonnewaug HS	652	9-12	75.6	8.6	77.3
Reg. 18 Lyme-Old Lyme HS	392	9-12	51.2	7.7	91.5
Reg. 19 E.O. Smith HS	1,033	9-12	110.5	9.3	76.5
<u><i>Others, not in DRG C:</i></u>					
The Gilbert School	410	9-12	49.8	8.2	61.3
Reg 1 Housatonic Reg. HS	319	9-12	49	6.5	68.5

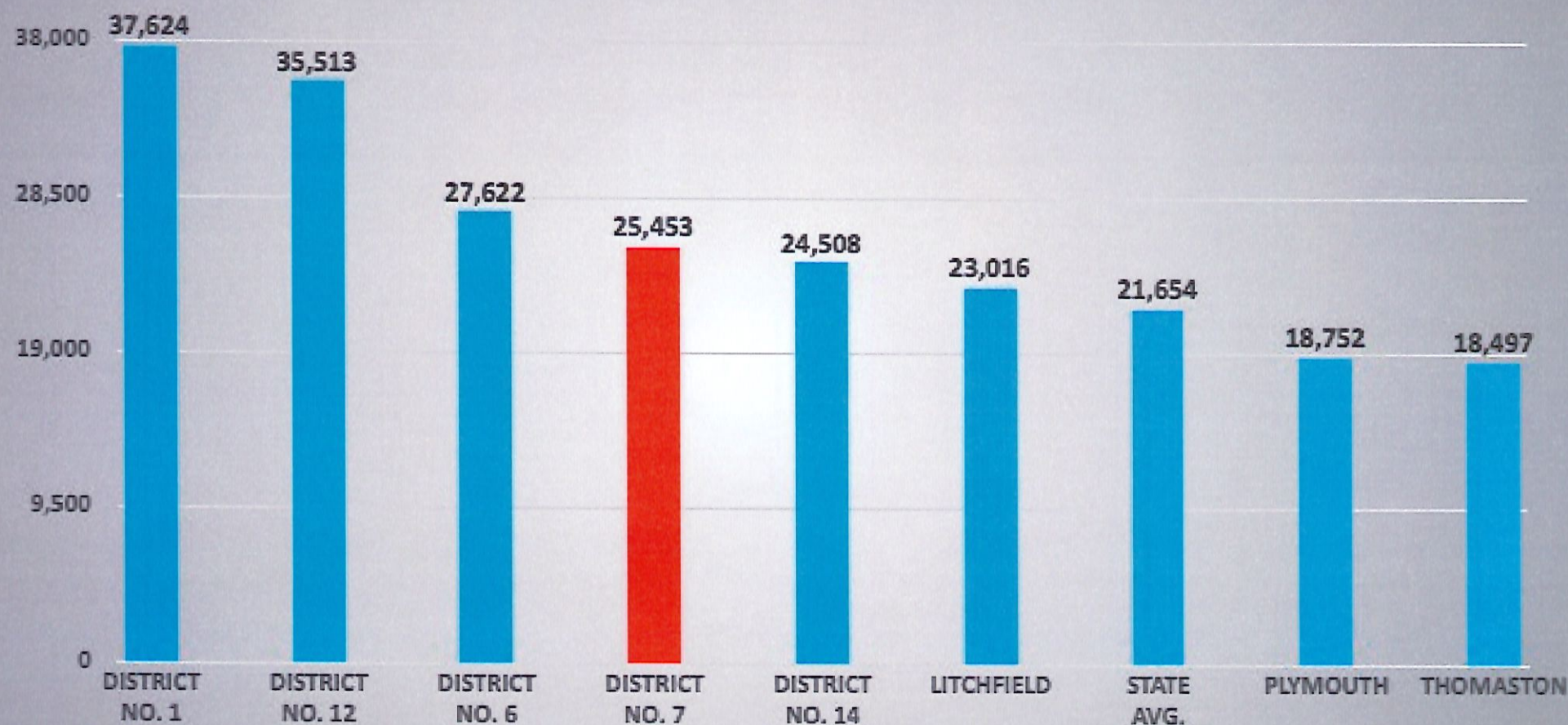


## **How do our *State Report Card* Results compare to DRG C Middle Schools?**

<b>School:</b>	<b>Student #</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>F.T.E.</b>	<b>F.T.E./Student Ratio</b>	<b>Accountability Index Score:</b>
<b>Northwestern MS</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>78.2</b>
<b>Canton MS</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Ellington MS</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>67.4</b>
<b>Oxford MS</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>58.8</b>
<b>Somers MS</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>6-8</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>72.3</b>
<b>Suffield MS</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>6-8</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>66.5</b>
<b>Tolland MS</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>53.3</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>74.4</b>
<b>Reg. 4 MS</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>57.7</b>
<b>Reg. 8 RHAM MS</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Reg. 10 Har-Bur MS</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>5-8</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>75.9</b>



## Range of Net Current Expenditures Per Pupil Berkshire League\*



\*Data for Gilbert unavailable

Source: CSDE 1/25/24





# Northwestern Middle School





# Northwestern Middle School

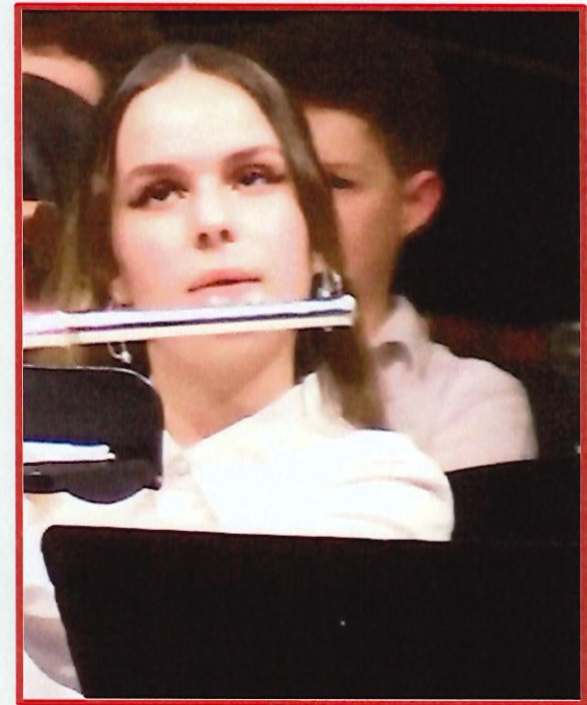
## Smarter Balanced Achievement Results

	2021	2022	2023
<b>ELA</b>	58%	62%	<b>68%</b>
<b>Math</b>	34%	50%	<b>61%</b>
<b>NGSS</b>	58%	64%	<b>71%</b>

Percentage of students that met/exceeded goal



# Middle School Points of Pride





# Our Northwestern MS Students' Satisfaction With Their School

## 9 PASS Factors

1. Feelings about school
2. Perceived learning capability
3. Self-regard as a learner
4. Preparedness for learning
5. Attitudes to teachers
6. General work ethic
7. Confidence in learning
8. Attitudes to attendance
9. Response to curriculum

High satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 31st - 100th percentile
Moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 21st - 30th percentile
Low moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 6th - 20th percentile
Low satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the lowest 5% of responses

## Fall 2023 Overall:

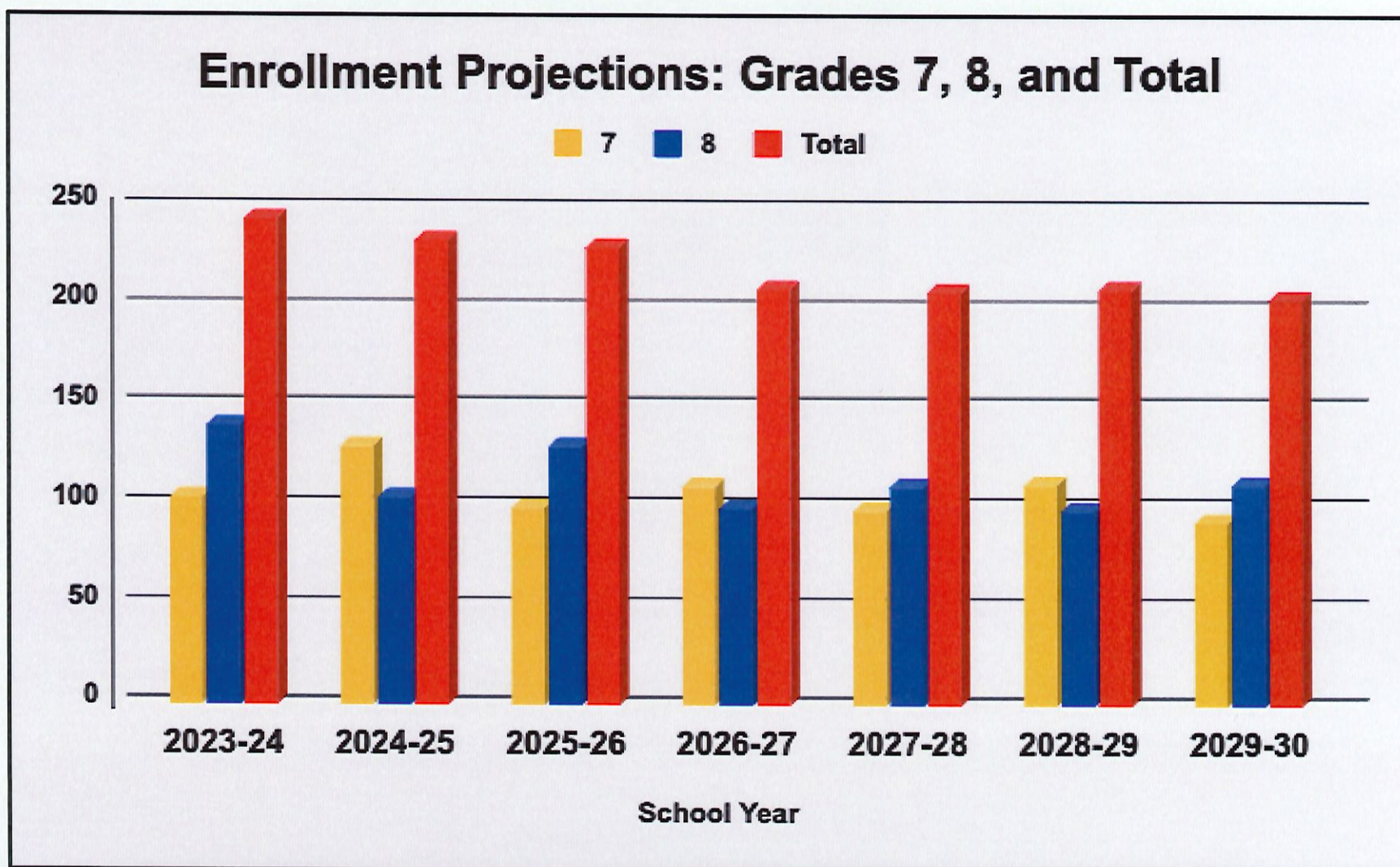
Factor	Feelings about school	Perceived learning capability	Self-regard as a learner	Preparedness for learning	Attitudes to teachers	General work ethic	Confidence in learning	Attitudes to attendance	Response to curriculum demands
Percentile score	62.1	56.3	60.0	46.3	57.9	64.6	55.3	49.6	51.9



# Middle School Enrollment Outlook

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
7	104	130	100	110	98	112	93
8	141	104	130	100	110	98	112
Total:	245	234	230	210	208	210	205

\*Oct. 2023





# Northwestern High School

*focused on expanded opportunities and excellence*



## Additional Course Offerings

- **Agricultural Education**
  - Ag Business Management
  - Fisheries Management
- **Art**
  - Digital Design Studio
  - Art Classroom Mentorship
- **Business**
  - Advanced Personal Finance
  - Business Classroom Mentorship
- **Education**
  - UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It
- **English**
  - Journalism II
- **PE/Wellness**
  - UConn ECE: Exercise and Wellness for Everyone
- **Science**
  - Zoology
  - UConn EMT Training (pending approval)
- **Social Studies**
  - History of Rock and Roll
- **World Language**
  - **Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Film**
  - **Adv. Topics in Italian: Honors Novel**





# Northwestern High School



Exemplary High Performance



# PSAT COMPARATIVE 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

	Total Students	Mean Score	Mean ERW Score	Mean Math Score
Class of 2025	153	971	494	477
<b>Class of 2024</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>499</b>
Class of 2023	144	983	503	480



# SAT DATA COMPARATIVE

	Ave. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
Class of 2024	1060	532	528
Class of 2023	1023	523	500
Class of 2022	1081	546	535

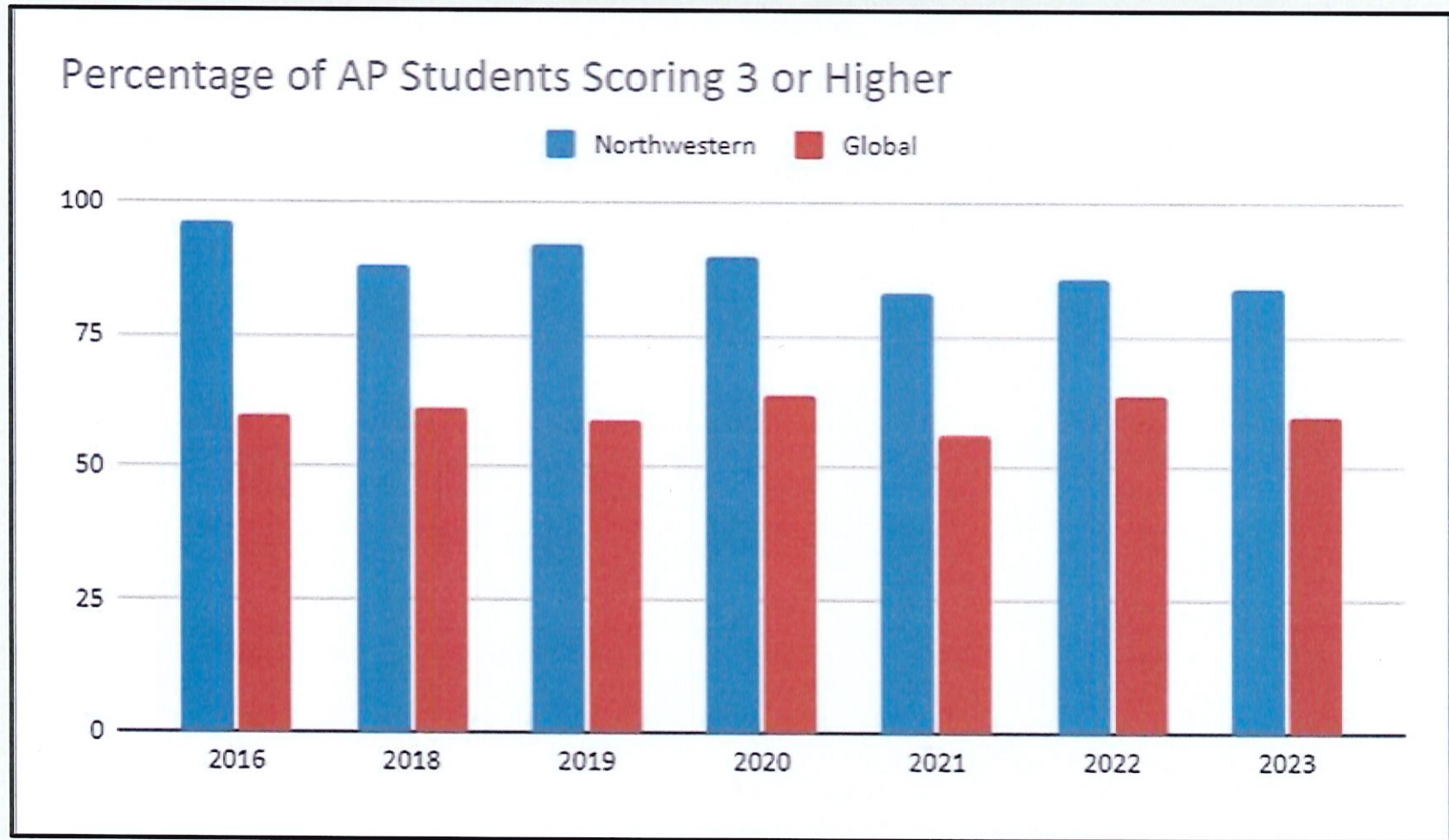
## SAT DATA – CLASS OF 2024 STATE COMPARATIVE

Group	Avg. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
NWR7 Class of 2024	1060	532	528
NWR7 Class of 2023	1023	523	500
State of CT	975	493	482



# Percentage of AP Students Scoring 3 or Higher

*83 Northwestern students took 137 AP exams*

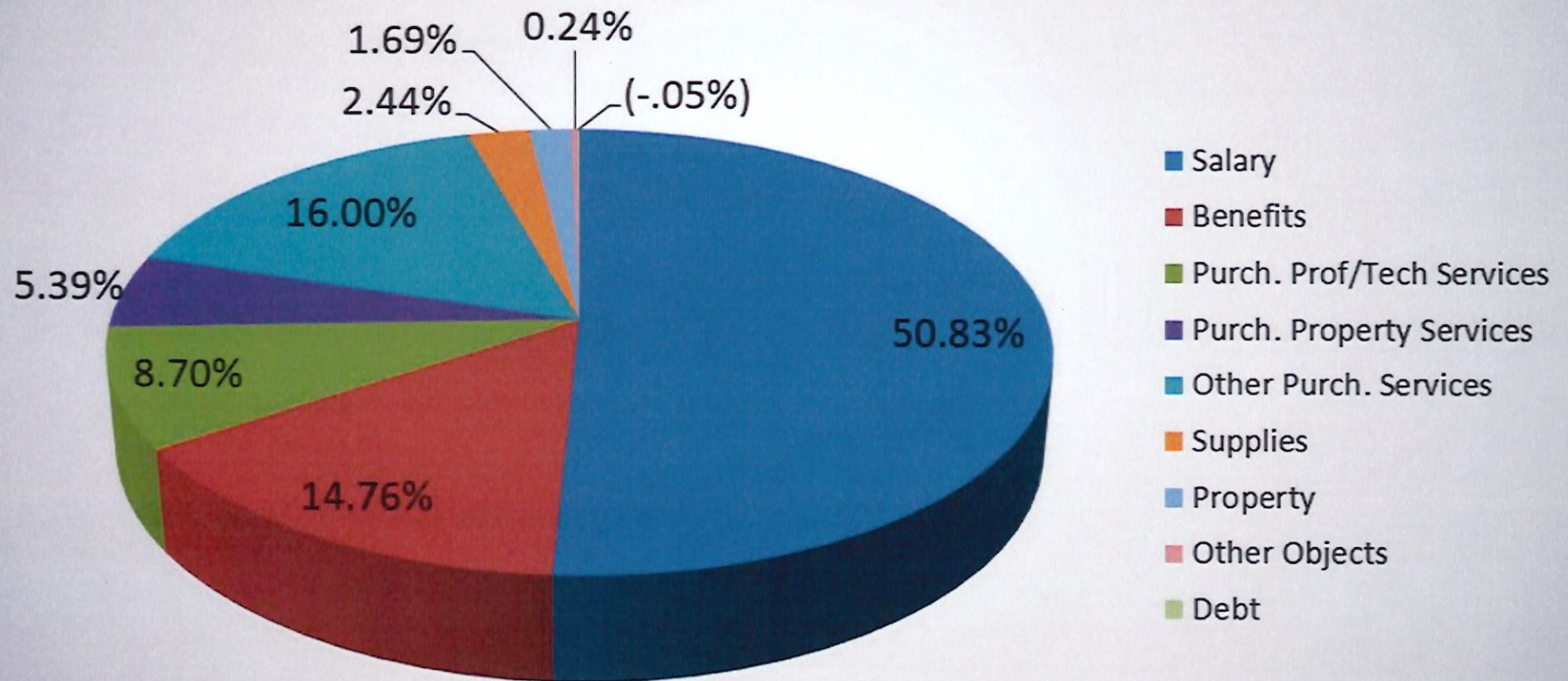


- *12 UConn ECE Courses will also be offered next year!*
- *58 Students Currently enrolled in UConn Courses*



# Object Breakdown

## \$24,305,668





# 100

## Salaries

### Increase of \$266,299 or 2.20%

#### **Increases:**

- Contractual Salary Increases

#### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Reduce 1 Teacher from H.S. English
- Reduce 1 Teacher from H.S./M.S. World Language
- Reduce 0.6 Teacher from H.S. Social Studies (0.8 fewer sections offered due to Dept. Leader Shift)
- EdAdvance School Based Mental Health Grant used to fund SEL/Academic Support in MS
- Any new personnel requests were denied (including 1.0 Agriscience teacher)

# 200

## Benefits

### Increase of \$217,661 or 6.46%

#### **Increases:**

- Medical Health Insurance Renewal: 11.6%

#### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Life Insurance Renewal at 0%
- Unemployment Renewal at 0%
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Renewal at 0%
- Reduced benefits for 3 staff members



# **300 Professional/Technical Services**

## **Increase of \$67,311 or 3.29%**

### **Increases:**

- Medical Advisor Increase
- Athletic Trainer Increase (change in State requirements)
- Shared Services Assessment up 3%

### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Many accounts held to current funding levels
- Use of \$30,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education expenditures through Shared Services
- Use of \$60,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education Professional and Technical Services

# **400 Property Services**

## **Increase of \$1,230 or 0.09%**

### **Account Factors:**

- Most accounts held to 0%
- Energy, Fuel, and Utilities Adjustments
- Snow Removal/Ice Management Increase



# 500

## Other Purchased Services

### Increase of \$307,374 or 8.58%

#### **Increases:**

- Additional Special Education Outplacements Increase the Tuition and Transportation Costs
- Rising Special Education Costs
- Cyber Security Insurance

#### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Most accounts held to 0% increase
- Excess Cost Offset for Transportation \$70,000
- Excess Cost Offset for Outplacements \$480,000

# 600

## Supplies

### Decrease of -\$1,970 or -0.33%

#### **Increases:**

- Library Supplies, Building Maintenance Supplies

#### **Budget Mitigation Actions:**

- Departments held to 0% increase (reallocations within department)
- Textbooks Reduced



**700**

## **Property**

**Decrease of -\$6,921 or -1.66%**

### **Decreases:**

- Reduced Instructional Equipment Replacements
- Reduced Special Education Capital Outlay

**800**

## **Other Objects**

**Decrease of -\$844 or -1.44%**

- No new borrowing since 2012
- Adjustments to Dues/Fees



**900**

**Other Funds**

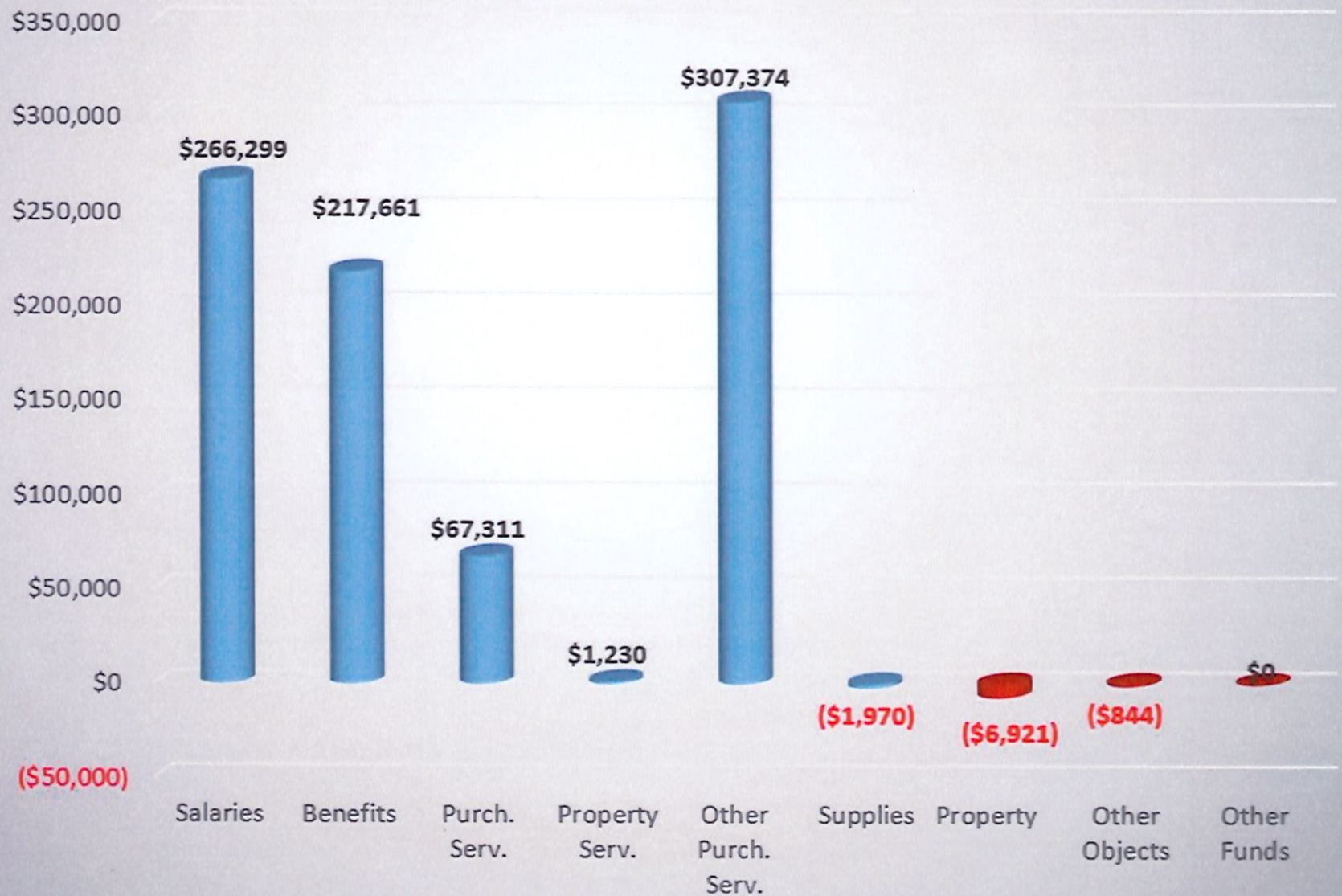
**\$0 or 0%**

**No New Borrowing**

- No changes



# 2024-2025 Proposed Budget Increase of \$850,140





# **ECS Funding By Town for FY 2025:**

## **State Adopted Budget and Governor's Proposed Adjustments**

*Educational Cost Share funds are the state funds allocated to support each town, based on a town wealth formula. Some districts are having their benefit phased up at an escalated rate based on legislation 2 years ago. Others are having funds phased down and being held harmless over the next couple of years until 2026, receiving flat funding. Our 4 Region #7 towns' ECS funding is as follows*

<b>Barkhamsted</b>		<b>Colebrook</b>	
<b>FY 2025 Adopted Budget / Governor's 2025 Proposed Budget Adjustments</b>		<b>FY 2025 Adopted Budget / Governor's 2025 Proposed Budget Adjustments</b>	
<b>\$1,494,242</b>	<b>\$1,494,242</b>	<b>\$403,912</b>	<b>\$403,912</b>
<b>New Hartford</b>		<b>Norfolk</b>	
<b>FY 2025 Adopted Budget / Governor's 2025 Proposed Budget Adjustments</b>		<b>FY 2025 Adopted Budget / Governor's 2025 Proposed Budget Adjustments</b>	
<b>\$2,913,010</b>	<b>\$2,918,203</b>	<b>\$49,924</b>	<b>\$53,125</b>



# Excess Cost Expenditure Offset

Code	Description	2023-2024	2024-2025
325	Shared Services	\$30,000	\$30,000
326	Professional/Tech Services	\$55,000	\$60,000
511	Transportation-Special Education	\$55,000	\$70,000
562	Tuitions – Special Education (H.S. & M.S.)	\$257,000	\$480,000
	TOTAL	\$397,000	\$640,000

- Districts are reimbursed by the state for the expenses associated with educating special education students with a cost above 4.5x the per pupil expenditure (\$25,453)\*. For us, that cost is \$114,539\*. If a student's educational costs **do not** reach that threshold, the district pays the full amount.
- The state covers a percentage of the **amount in excess of \$114,539**. New legislation has increased the reimbursement percentage. We have budgeted 82% reimbursement for the costs over the threshold. The actual amount the state set aside for Excess Cost for the 2024-2025 school year is based on state funding, therefore unknown and unpredictable, but ***this represents a risk within our budget.***

\* Most current information available (1/25/24)



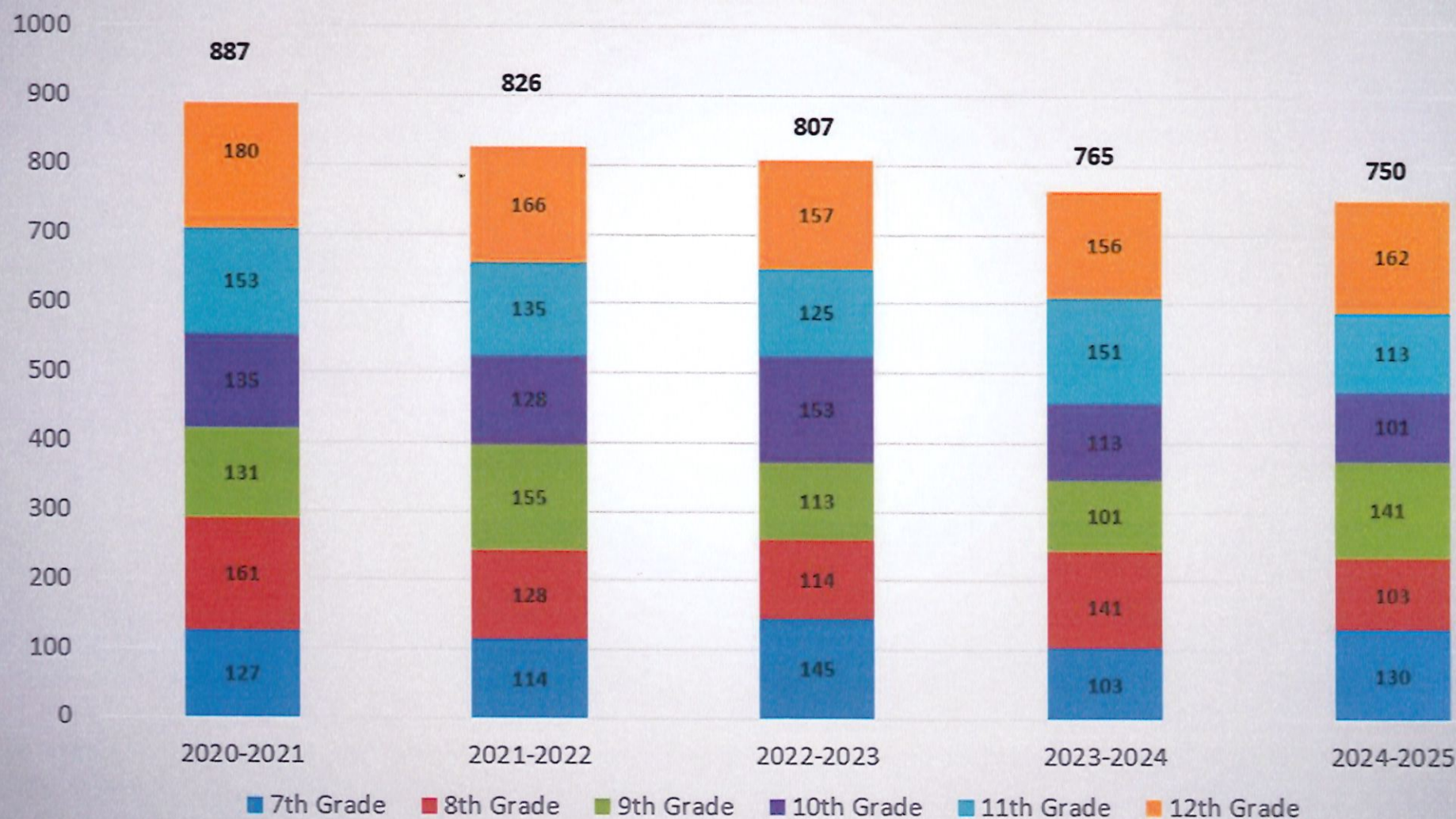
# Revenues

Description	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Estimated	Difference
Tuition-Regular	\$657,150	\$543,400	(\$113,750)
Tuition-Special Ed	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tuition – Ag Ed	\$354,796	\$185,979	(\$168,817)
Rental Income	\$7,500	\$10,500	\$3,000
Interest Income	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
Sprint Contract	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ag Ed Grant	<u>\$624,480</u>	<u>\$793,500</u>	<u>\$169,020</u>
<i>Subtotal Revenues</i>	<i>\$1,658,926</i>	<i>\$1,548,379</i>	<i>(\$110,547)</i>
Budget Variance	\$688,578	\$819,700	\$131,122
Subtotal with Offset	\$2,347,504	\$2,368,079	\$20,575
Budget	\$23,455,528	\$24,305,668	\$850,140
Assessments (Budget minus Subtotal with offset)	\$21,108,024	\$21,937,589	\$829,565



# Straight Line ADM – Member Towns

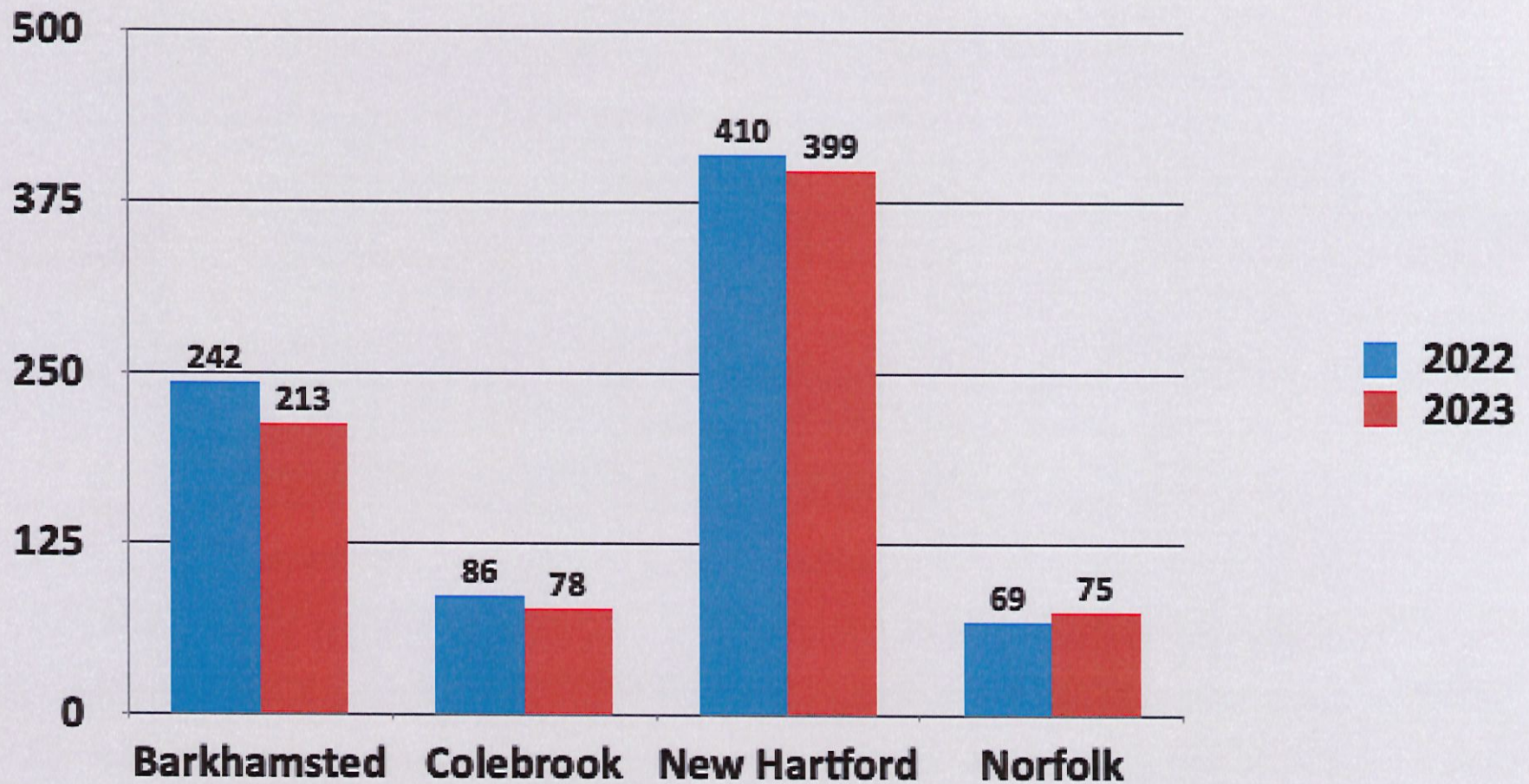
## Current and Projected



\*Based on Oct. 1, 2023



## Change in Average Daily Membership By Town



\* Based on October 1, 2023 CSDE



# A Look at Total School Enrollment

October 1, 2023

Grade 7:	108
Grade 8:	145
Grade 9:	116
Grade 10:	132
Grade 11:	176
Grade 12:	146
<u>HTA:</u>	<u>19</u>

Total: 842

Our member town students are joined by Agricultural Education and tuition paying students from: Winsted, Hartland, Torrington, Canton, and Granby.

Total includes magnet schools and outplacements.



# 2024-25 Assessment Explanation

Budget 24/25	<b>\$24,305,668</b>	3.62%
Revenue	<b>\$1,548,379</b>	<b>(6.66%)</b>
Assessment Offset	<b>\$819,700</b>	19.04%
<b>NET ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>\$21,937,589</b>	<b>3.93%</b>



# ***Reductions Within Current Superintendent's Proposed Budget***

**Initial Department Requested Budget:**

**\$25,683,468 (9.5% increase from current 2023-2024 budget)**

**Superintendent's Proposed Budget:**

**\$24,305,668 (3.62% increase from Current 2023-2024 Budget)**

**Requested Budget Was Reduced By 5.88% to Current Proposal**

- Removed any new staff requests**
- Reduced supply accounts to current level of funding**
- Assumed risk in outplacement contingency and Excess Cost reimbursement rates (excess cost currently budgeted at 82%)**

Fiscal Year	Uncapped Entitlement Request from Districts	Amount Appropriated by the Legislature	Percentage of Excess Cost Reimbursed
2019-20	\$197,834,955	\$140,247,371	71%
2020-21	\$175,626,041	\$141,049,061	80%
2021-22	\$175,733,825	\$140,619,782	80%
2022-23	\$203,882,252	\$156,119,782	77%
2023-24 (Preliminary)	\$255,102,708	\$181,119,782	71%



# Historical Perspective on Assessments

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	5 Year Average
Barkhamsted	-0.84%	5.24%	0.01%	0.65%	-3.52%	0.31%
Colebrook	2.49%	4.01%	8.37%	2.79%	-0.55%	3.42%
New Hartford	7.44%	-2.12%	1.20%	3.69%	6.71%	3.38%
Norfolk	-12.02%	-5.41%	6.43%	5.26%	19.12%	2.68%
<b>Total Assessment Increase:</b>	2.49%	0.38%	1.97%	2.79%	3.93%	2.31%
<b>Average of Total Assessment Increase ~ 2.31%</b>						
<b>Total Expenditure Increase:</b>	2.53%	1.33%	2.45%	2.42%	3.62%	2.47%
<b>5-Year Average of Total Expenditure Increases ~ 2.47%</b>						



## In Summary...

- Regional School District No. 7 provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners.
- We know and care about all of our students, and helping to prepare them for a successful and rewarding life is our top priority.
- We develop strong and meaningful relationships between faculty, staff, and the student body.
- We hire and retain extraordinary teachers and support staff who work alongside strong, experienced administrators.
- Northwestern High School seniors graduate with exceptional experiences and are well prepared for their future.
- Our students demonstrate excellence across all disciplines, including our Agriscience program, and in the fine and performing arts.
- NWR7 develops and supports high performing student athletic programs and athletes across all sports.
- Our school community values kindness and is focused on the emotional well-being of all.
- We provide a high-value, high-quality education and enjoy overwhelming community support.
- RSD7's per pupil expenditures are in the midrange of the Berkshire League with exceptional academic results.
- We would like to thank our facilities team for taking such good care of our buildings and grounds.

***Regional School District No. 7***  
***The Pride of the Northwest Corner***



# District Budget Meeting

**MAY 6, 2024**

**NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL SCHOOL  
Dr. Roberta Ohotnicky Little Theater  
7:00 PM**



## BUDGET REFERENDUM

**MAY 7, 2024**

**Town Polling Locations  
Hours may vary by town**







**Thank You for Your Support**  
**For budget details, visit:**  
**[www.nwr7.com](http://www.nwr7.com)**





REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7  
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

March 6, 2024 – 6 p.m.

**DRAFT**

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Lisa Fragale(C), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, Barkhamsted First Selectman Mr. Nicholas Lukiwsky, Barkhamsted Board of Finance Chairperson Mr. Richard Winn, Barkhamsted Selectman Mr. Mark Mahoney, New Hartford First Selectman Mr. Daniel Jerram, New Hartford Board of Finance Chairperson Ms. Kerry Guilfoyle, Colebrook First Selectman Mr. Brad Bremer, Colebrook Board of Finance Chairperson Mr. Duncan Wilber, Colebrook Board of Finance Ms. Kathleen Adams, Norfolk First Selectman Mr. Matthew Riiska, Norfolk Board of Finance Jeremiah Bickford.

**Absent:** Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read called the Board of Education meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Ms. Sexton Read opened with a summary of the 2024-2025 Proposed RSD#7 Budget and invited the town officials to provide their input and/or comments pertaining to the District's 2024-2025 Proposed Budget.

New Hartford First Selectman, Mr. Jerram questioned why on the staffing page of the budget, the SRO position is listed as 0. Ms. Sexton Read and Superintendent LePage explained it is moved to the Misc. Purchased Services- BOE account located under Prof/Technical Services in the budget. Ms. Sexton Read explained the SRO is a constable of Barkhamsted and RSD#7 reimburses Barkhamsted for his services. First Selectman Jerram thanked everyone at the meeting and explained he is a graduate of Regional School District No. 7. His area of concern was the staffing situation and the decline of the student population. First Selectman Jerram stated that over the last 5, 6 and 7 years, the student enrollment has decreased, yet the staffing population has had a minimal decrease. Superintendent LePage communicated that he appreciated Mr. Jerram asking this question. Superintendent LePage expressed that he had numerous conversations with his leadership team in reviewing all positions and confirming all positions are critical to the success of the students and the school. Superintendent LePage explained that he understands the ratio of students to teachers is a topic of concern. That being said, RSD#7 produces a great education and wonderful students leave this district well prepared for life after graduation. Superintendent LePage briefly explained the district lost a teacher through attrition and also reduced a World Language teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. The Library Media Specialist will be increased to 1.00 FTE, yet the 2022-2023 teacher in this position was only a .50 FTE. The current Library Media Specialist is currently a .60 FTE in Social Studies. Increasing this position to an FTE of 1.00 will decrease the Social Studies staffing. Superintendent LePage expressed he is researching with his team the outlook of the next 3, 4 and 5 years and how to plan for this declining enrollment yet still keep RSD#7's outstanding quality of education. Ms. Sexton Read communicated that last year, there was an increase in staff due to a specialized special education position. This increase was created to offset and deter the cost of the outplacement of students. She expressed that some of the inability to reduce staff is due to the requirements of the High School to offer the 25 credits, and these credits have to be in particular areas of education.

Colebrook Board of Finance Chair Duncan Wilber asked what other aspects are parts of the RSD#7 revenue, beside the Ag Ed tuitions. Mr. Wilber suggested an increase in the offerings of technical education similar to Oliver Wolcott Technical School, to try to increase enrollment and revenue. Ms. Sexton Read explained that the other revenue for RSD#7 incorporates Hartland students, due to RSD#7 being a "choice" High School for Hartland students. She expressed that the tech ed department has currently gone through



some changes to increase its offerings. It will attract more of RSD#7 students to stay at RSD#7, instead of leaving to attend other technical schools, which would increase enrollment. Ms. Sexton Read communicated that the plan is to increase the awareness and raise the profile of the Ag Ed program to attract more students to RSD#7 and to also encourage Hartland students to attend RSD#7.

New Harford Board of Finance Chair Kerry Guilfoyle asked if the Ag Ed tuition enrollment is at its maximum or is there room for more. Superintendent LePage responded that there is room for more, yet the challenge is the legislation of the "four-year average rule" that limits the Ag Ed enrollment. This rule states that the ascending district does not have to allow students to attend Ag Ed over the last four-year student average. This rule minimizes enrollment which then decreases tuition. Superintendent LePage is speaking with local legislation to try and change this "four-year average rule." This rule is a challenge, limiting the number of students attending Ag Ed.

Barkhamsted Selectman Mr. Mark Mahoney communicated that it is an interesting avenue to maybe explore in the future in regards to expanding the offerings of tech ed and the trades education. Superintendent LePage expressed there are many challenges in regards to funding new programs and also the limiting pool of teachers certified in the trades, yet it is definitely worth the exploration.

Colebrook Board of Finance Chair Duncan Wilber asked the detail of the capital projects. Superintendent LePage listed the roof, the fire alarm system, new legislation mandated an assessment of the school's indoor air quality so RSD#7 needs to evaluate the system, based on the new requirements. RSD#7 is trying to replace all carpeting with tile throughout the school. Discussion followed in regards to SAT scores and possible decreases in the assessments to towns by reviewing and looking at this budget to see where additional savings can be made.

Ms. Sexton Read and Superintendent LePage thanked all the town officials for taking the time come to this workshop. Ms. Sexton Read said anytime there are questions or concerns, please reach out to Superintendent LePage and/or Mr. James Gaskins.

### **Board Discussion on Proposed Budget**

Ms. Sexton Read opened the floor to Board members for any questions, concerns, or clarification. Superintendent LePage begin the conversation stating the health insurance cost was decreased from 11.6% to a 10.95% increase. Superintendent LePage, after many discussions with the team, Mr. Gaskins and Ms. Molly Sexton Read, has decreased the excess cost budget reimbursement from the State from 82% to 71% to alleviate the fluctuation and risk associated with this State funding. Lastly, he shared that with a new attrition of another HS English Teacher, he is hoping to fill this position with a teacher with a BA Step 1 or Step II for savings. After all of these revisions, the proposed budget will change from 3.62% to 3.72%. Brief discussion followed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Ms. Duran, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ADJOURN** at 7:44 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Kenneson. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None.  
**MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett  
Board Clerk



# Northwestern Regional School District No. 7

## Educator Diversity Plan

COVER PAGE	
<b>District:</b>	Northwestern Regional School District No. 7
<b>Vision:</b>	Regional School District No. 7 is an organization where our goal is to establish and maintain that the very best, most caring, and most talented educators are serving our students. We acknowledge, respect, and empathize with people of all backgrounds. Our recruitment and retention practices are focused on hiring and retaining diverse educators who will ensure the success of all students.
<b>Theory of Action</b>	If we value educator diversity through our recruitment, hiring, and retention processes, then we will be more likely to increase and support a culturally diverse workforce.
<b>Team Lead:</b>	Steve LePage - Superintendent
<b>Team Members:</b>	Superintendent, Principals, Special Education Supervisor, Middle and High School Administration, Central Office Personnel



# Educator Diversity Plan - Recruitment

RECRUITMENT (GOAL #1)								
Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication/ Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Create a system for potential candidates to build an awareness of our district.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	Attend educator diversity recruitment conferences and job fairs sponsored by diverse community organizations or otherwise targeted toward diverse individuals.	Superintendent, Principals, Special Education Supervisor, Middle and High School Administration, Central Office Personnel	Starting 7/1/2024	1. Document the educator diversity recruitment conferences and job fairs that are attended by district administration. 2. Document the number of contacts made at job fairs. 3. Document the number of contacts that submit applications for employment. 4. Document the number of applicants hired.	Superintendent, Principals, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel and Special Education, Middle and High School Administration, Human Resources Personnel will attend job fairs. The District will share informational materials (electronic and print) about Northwestern Regional, including district website information, links to the Highlander Highlights Newsletter, and a link to our employment page.	Due to the size of our NWR7 school district, we have limited openings within our district in any given year. We are also in the process of reducing staff in several areas over the next several years due to shrinking enrollment. There will be times when we attend job fairs with minimal or no current open positions.	The dates and times of job fairs sponsored by diverse community organizations or otherwise targeted toward diverse individuals needs to be communicated and arrangements need to be made for the appropriate administration to attend.



## RECRUITMENT (GOAL #2)

Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication/Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Expand our applicant pool and attract a more racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse individuals to apply for open positions within the school district.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	Attend educator diversity recruitment conferences and job fairs sponsored by diverse community organizations or otherwise targeted toward diverse individuals. State in all employment postings that candidates of diverse backgrounds are highly encouraged to apply.	Superintendent, Principals, Special Education Supervisor, Middle and High School Administration, Central Office Personnel	July 2024	Utilize Frontline to monitor how many of our applicants are racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse.	Add the appropriate language and tracking through the Frontline application which will monitor how many of our applicants are racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse. Add to all employment postings that candidates of diverse backgrounds are highly encouraged to apply.	Due to the size of our school district, NWR7 Schools will not have as many employment opportunities as larger school districts. This will limit the expansion of our applicant pool.	The superintendent's administrative assistant will maintain a list of sites where positions are being posted and will adjust the wording on all postings to include that candidates of diverse backgrounds are highly encouraged to apply. The human resource secretary will add tracking through the Frontline application which will monitor how many of our applicants are racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse.



RECRUITMENT (GOAL #3)								
Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication/ Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Provide our current students with pathways to a career in education.	School Counseling Department	Provide opportunities for students to observe and work with elementary and middle school students within the region. Support high school students in understanding their options on how they can become certified as a Connecticut educator. Offering the "If You Love It, Teach It" UConn ECE Course.	High School Counselors, ECE Course Teacher	Starting 9/1/2024	The high school guidance department will monitor how many of our students pursue a post-secondary degree in education. The administration and school counselors will work to persuade students to consider the UConn ECE Teaching course.	Coordination between the administration, high school counselors and the middle and elementary principals to coordinate job shadow and volunteer opportunities. Training for the high school guidance department on how to track and monitor student career pathway choices through Naviance.	Scheduling conflict and a lack of student transportation could restrict the number of job shadow and volunteer opportunities in our local elementary schools. Since our middle school is on the same campus as our high school, shadows and experiences in the middle school will be much less complicated to arrange.	High school counselors and area principals will need to coordinate job shadow and volunteer opportunities.



# Northwestern Regional School District No. 7

## Educator Diversity Plan - Hiring & Selection

HIRING & SELECTION (GOAL #1)								
Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication / Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Maintain an awareness of application review and interview process bias.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	The District's administration will complete a training module on implicit bias and anti-bias in the hiring process. They will recognize and avoid practices that may result in bias such as considering residence proximity to the district, experience in the surrounding area districts, and referral by current employees as positive attributes of a candidate.	Superintendent, Principals, Special Education Supervisor, Middle and High School Administration, Central Office Personnel	Starting 7/1/2024	As part of the interview process, discuss each candidate and why they were interviewed and/or selected for an interview to reduce possible bias.	Utilize a common interview rating protocol to reduce subjectivity.	Ensure common hiring and selection processes across all school and district positions.	The district's administration will communicate with the interview committee the systems put in place to reduce possible bias.



# Northwestern Regional School District No. 7

## Educator Diversity Plan - Retention

RETENTION (GOAL #1)								
Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication/ Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Participate in conversations between school districts with similar educator demographics to discuss retention strategies.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	Participate in group conversation opportunities by pairing diverse hires with veteran diverse educators or with teachers in partnering school districts with similar demographics (Sharon, Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Falls Village/Canaan, Salisbury, Region 1, Region 10, Region 14). We are partnering with EdAdvance to host these conversations.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	July 2024	A structure will be in place to connect diverse groups of educators between districts	Collaboration with partner districts to create the conditions under which the conversations can flourish: release time, travel time/reimbursement.	The conversations may need to be held virtually to increase participation and reduce the time commitment required.	EdAdvance will connect with representatives from similar districts to develop a network of opportunities.



RETENTION (GOAL #2)								
Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication/ Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Further develop and sustain a climate and culture in which all educators feel welcomed, valued, and part of the Northwestern Regional Family.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	Pair all new hires with a tenured teacher to support them in their transition into the NWR7, and have administration check in with all new employees on at least a monthly basis.	Superintendent, Principals, Special Education Supervisor, Middle and High School Administration, Central Office Personnel	Current Practice	The Superintendent and the entire administrative team will meet with new faculty members at the beginning of each school year. Building administration will also check in with new faculty members at various times throughout the school year.	We will continue to utilize tenured teachers and our administration to support new employees.	Due to the size of our school district, we may not have tenured teachers in academic areas or grade levels that align to the new employee's content area. Support might have to be offered by individuals in different grade levels and academic departments.	The District's administration will communicate and align the tenured teacher support for all new hires.



## RETENTION (GOAL #3)

Goal	Who Manages the Goal?	Strategies/Key Activities			Indicators of Progress	Resources Required	Risks and Mitigation	Communication/ Engagement Efforts
		What?	Who Owns This?	By When?				
Identify areas for improvement in retaining faculty.	Steve LePage - Superintendent	Survey the certified and non-certified faculty to assess how supported they feel and identify areas for improving retention.	Superintendent, Principals, Special Education Supervisor, Middle and High School Administration, Central Office Personnel	Starting 7/1/2024	The results from the survey that certified and non-certified faculty will complete to assess retention strengths and weaknesses.	Google Form for the retention survey.	Certified and non-certified faculty taking the time to respond to the survey.	Superintendent and Principals will develop the retention survey and share with the administrative team for revisions prior to its release.



March 1, 2024

To: Molly Sexton Read

From: Brendan T. Fritch

Re: Gymnasium use

Dear Chairperson:

Would you please share my request to the Board of Education at the next meeting regarding the use of the gymnasiums for The Highlander Basketball Camp from August 5 to August 9, 2024? The basketball camp, entering consecutive year 34, provides instruction, drills, and games for all boys and girls entering grades 3-8. Approximately 95% of attending campers and staff are from the towns that send students to Regional School District #7.

As in the past, insurance coverage will be provided for the week of camp. The camp offers an opportunity for young boys and girls from each town to work together and build relationships before entering the middle and high school. The camp also provides an opportunity for young people to safely exercise, socialize, and learn about teamwork and sportsmanship along with the skills and knowledge to become better basketball players. Even more so than in the past, these are very important skills for our young people to develop.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brendan T. Fritch

The Highlander Basketball Camp Director  
(860) 480 3722